



COUNCIL MINUTES

JOINT MEETING WITH MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 29, 2010

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Joint Meeting with Mesa Public Schools Governing Board at the Mesa Public Schools Curriculum Services Center, Building 2, 549 North Stapley Drive, on April 29, 2010 at 6:25 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Scott Smith, Mayor
Alex Finter
Dina Higgins
Kyle Jones
Scott Somers

MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENCY

Dr. Michael Cowan,
Superintendent
Dr. Gerrick Monroe

STAFF PRESENT

Chris Brady
Scott Butler
Linda Crocker
Kari Kent
Tony Leftgo
Bryan Raines
Jim Schweisthal
Gordon Sheffield

GOVERNING BOARD PRESENT

Dave Lane, President
Mike Hughes
Mike Nichols
Steven Peterson
Ben Whiting

MESA SCHOOL DISTRICT STAFF PRESENT

Dr. Steve Hogen
Allen Moore
Alice Swinehart

1. Welcome and Introductions.

- Board President Dave Lane

Dr. Lane thanked everyone for their attendance at the meeting and requested that everyone present introduce themselves.

2. Prop 100 and Impact on Educational Programs.

- Dr. Gerrick Monroe

Dr. Monroe provided a brief overview of the potential impacts as a result of Proposition 100, which will appear on the ballot of the May 18th Special Election (a special one-cent sales tax will last for three years and generate \$1 billion each year). He noted that two-thirds of the anticipated funds have been earmarked for K-12 education. He advised that Mesa Public Schools is presently reviewing two separate budgets – one if Proposition 100 is successful and another in case it is not. He discussed budget reductions that have taken place over the last two years as a result of the State budget crisis and lack of enrollment, and said that if the issue fails it will directly impact the schools. He added that if it is successful, the 7% planned reduction is estimated at \$24 million and said that the amount would double if Proposition 100 does not pass.

Dr. Cowan asked what impact the failure of the issue would have on the City of Mesa and Mayor Smith replied that even if the issue passes the State will not have a balanced budget. He said that if it fails, State Shared Revenues will be reduced.

City Manager Christopher Brady noted that over the last three to four years the City of Mesa has reduced its budget drastically. He said that if the ballot issue fails the impact would be devastating. He stated that in order to avoid cutting back on Public Safety, the City would have to close all of the libraries, parks, museums, etc.

Mayor Smith advised that the \$2 million cut in transit funds had a drastic impact on the City.

Dr. Gerrick commented that if Proposition 100 is successful, the plan is not to implement any layoffs, but a failure would result in cuts in the number of teachers and educational programs.

Mayor Smith reported that over the last two years the City reduced staffing by about 11% and decreased salaries across the board. He added that the City is hoping to “hold the line” in these areas. He said that the City has not laid off any Public Safety personnel, but new employees have not been hired.

Mayor Smith also discussed the COPS Program and explained that the City plans to redirect those funds for retention purposes.

3. Update on Defining the Future.

- Dr. Michael Cowan

Dr. Cowen referred to a handout distributed to the attendees (Mesa Public Schools, Defining the Future Initiatives, **See Attachment 1**) and briefly highlighted the various initiatives listed: High School Grades Reorganization; Summit Academy; Franklin at Alma Elementary School; Mesa Education Center; Expansion of the Jordan Early Education Classes; Transfer of McKellips Middle School Students; and the Relocation of Montessori Programs.

Boardmember Hughes advised that many in the community believe that the problems have been solved by doing this, but it is really just the tip of the iceberg.

Dr. Cowen added that they are “right sizing” their organization and reported that they have lost 5,000 to 6,000 students over the past few years.

(Vice Mayor Jones arrived at the meeting at 6:45 p.m.)

Mayor Smith commented on the fact that Charter Schools have greatly impacted growth.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that three School Resource Officer (SRO) positions at the high school level will be eliminated if the grant funding that the schools receive is lost.

Boardmember Hughes stated that a decrease in the number of SROs will impact the City because Public Safety personnel will be responding to the calls.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the importance of neighborhood schools and maximizing the use of all facilities; the fact that the sports programs will have a different look; and efforts to strengthen intramurals.

4. Shared Resources.

a. Sports Program – Dr. Steve Hogen

Dr. Hogen advised that by moving the 9th graders to high school additional room will be opened up for 7th and 8th grade students. He discussed the valuable partnership that exists between Mesa Public Schools and the City of Mesa and noted that taxpayers are receiving great benefits because of that partnership. He said that their goal is to increase opportunities for youths to participate in sports. He reported that Skyline pool is ahead of schedule and that the upcoming Kino pool already has some events booked.

b. SRO's – Mr. Allen Moore

Mr. Moore stated that one of the significant benefits of having SROs at the schools is the fact that they are oftentimes able to find out things ahead of time as a result of the rapport they build with the students. He emphasized the importance of keeping the partnership going in this critical area and to make SROs at schools a priority.

Mayor Smith assured Mr. Moore that SROs are a priority but added that Mesa's highest priority is first response in the area of public safety.

Boardmember Hughes commented that the schools want to help the City as much as they can. Additional discussion ensued relative to the important role SROs play in the various schools and the successes that have been realized as a result of utilizing security cameras at schools.

5. Mayor's Education Priority Agenda.

• Mayor Scott Smith

Mayor Smith stated that he and the entire Council appreciates everything that Mesa Public Schools does and added that education is an area that the City is emphasizing. He said that Mesa has changed

– there used to be employment opportunities after graduation but that is not the case now. He emphasized the importance of pursuing economic development opportunities and the strong need for a full economic base. He advised that Mesa is losing out on a lot of good opportunities by “exporting people out and not getting anything back in return.” The Mayor discussed the importance of getting people to talk and think about reuse and commented on the educational opportunities on Power Road that will become a center of great opportunity – The Power Road Knowledge Corridor. He said that people are not aware of the resources that exist and added that education is of major importance.

6. Adjournment.

President Lane again thanked Mayor Smith, the Council and their staff for attending the meeting. He noted that forums such as this are important and stated that a good public school system is a foundation for the community. He said that Mesa Public Schools recognizes that responsibility and takes it very seriously. He reported that MPS is a very large employer in the community, employing approximately 11,000 people. He added that the Mesa Public School District is the largest school district in the State.

Without objection, the Joint Meeting between the Mesa City Council and the Mesa Public Schools Governing Board adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Joint Meeting between the Mesa City Council and Mesa Public Schools Governing Board held on the 29th day of April, 2010. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

lgc

Attachments: 1